

that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 121, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DEFINING CERTAIN ATROCITIES AS WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND GENOCIDE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 75) expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandean, Kaka'i, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, "war crimes", "crimes against humanity", and "genocide", as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 75

Whereas Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities have been an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle East for millennia;

Whereas the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and associated extremists are committing egregious atrocities against ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq and Syria, including Christians (including Assyrian Chaldean Syriac, Armenian, and Melkite communities, among others), Yezidis, Turkmen, Shabak, Sabae-Mandean, and Kaka'i, among others;

Whereas ISIL specifically targets these religious and ethnic minorities, intending to kill them or force their submission, conversion, or expulsion;

Whereas religious and ethnic minorities have been murdered, subjugated, forced to emigrate, and subjected to grievous bodily and psychological harm, kidnapping, human trafficking, torture, and rape;

Whereas ISIL engages in, and publicly argues in favor of, the sexual enslavement of non-Muslim women, including pre-pubescent girls;

Whereas ISIL atrocities against Christians, Yezidis, and other minorities have included mass murder, crucifixions, beheadings, rape, torture, enslavement, the kidnapping of children, and other violence deliberately calculated to eliminate their communities from the so-called Islamic State;

Whereas ISIL has deliberately destroyed and looted numerous cultural sites, religious shrines, churches, monasteries, and museums in order to eradicate the cultures of ethnic and religious minorities from the territory it attempts to control;

Whereas these atrocities have been undertaken with the specific intent to bring about

the eradication of those communities and the destruction of their cultural heritage;

Whereas ISIL operations have in fact driven minority religious and ethnic communities from their ancestral homelands;

Whereas under applicable international law referenced in section 2441 of Title 18 of the United States Code, murder, torture, mutilation, rape, cruel treatment, and hostage-taking of non-combatants constitute war crimes;

Whereas crimes against humanity, as defined by the International Military Tribunal convened at Nuremberg in 1945, and in various international instruments since then, include murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, as well as persecution on political, racial, or religious grounds in connection with such crimes;

Whereas the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed and ratified by the United States, defines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group";

Whereas on August 7, 2014, Secretary of State John Kerry declared that "ISIL's campaign of terror against the innocent, including Yezidi and Christian minorities, and its grotesque and targeted acts of violence bear all the warning signs and hallmarks of genocide";

Whereas in August 2014, the United States conducted targeted airstrikes and humanitarian assistance operations to help break the siege of Mount Sinjar, saving the lives of thousands of Yezidi men, women, and children;

Whereas His Holiness, Pope Francis, has noted that "entire communities, especially—but not only—Christians and Yezidis have suffered and are still suffering inhuman violence because of their ethnic and religious identity" and that, for Christians being killed for their faith in the Middle East, "a form of genocide -- I insist on the word -- is taking place, and it must end";

Whereas a March 13, 2015, report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights detailed "acts of violence perpetrated [by ISIL] against civilians because of their affiliation or perceived affiliation to an ethnic or religious group" and stated that "[i]t is reasonable to conclude that some of these incidents, considering the overall information, may constitute genocide";

Whereas in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on May 13, 2015, Dominican Sister Diana Momeka, whose convent was driven from Mosul, Iraq, described the ISIL offensive as "cultural and human genocide" and stated that today "[t]he only Christians that remain in the Plain of Nineveh are those who are held as hostages";

Whereas in December 2015, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide issued a report focused on the treatment of minorities in Nineveh from June to August 2014, which found that ISIL had "targeted civilians based on group identity, committing mass atrocities to control, expel, and exterminate ethnic and religious minorities" and, in that context, "com-

mitted crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing against [Christian, Yezidi, Turkmen, Shabak, Sabae-Mandean, and Kaka'i] communities in Nineva" and "perpetrated genocide against the Yezidi people";

Whereas on December 7, 2015, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom called on the United States Government "to designate the Christian, Yezidi, Shi'a, Turkmen, and Shabak communities of Iraq and Syria as victims of genocide by ISIL" and urged world leaders "to condemn the genocidal actions and crimes against humanity of ISIL that have been directed at these groups and other ethnic and religious groups";

Whereas on February 3, 2016, the European Parliament expressed the view that ISIL "is committing genocide against Christians and Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities";

Whereas Syrian President Bashar al Assad's violence against the Syrian people has attracted foreign fighters from around the world, who have supported and committed ISIL atrocities; and

Whereas according to some estimates, the conflict among all parties to the Syrian civil war has killed 470,000 and displaced 11,000,000 people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against Christians, Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(2) all governments, including the United States, and international organizations, including the United Nations and the Office of the Secretary-General, should call ISIL atrocities by their rightful names: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(3) the member states of the United Nations should coordinate urgently on measures to prevent further war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Iraq and Syria, and to punish those responsible for these ongoing crimes, including by the collection and preservation of evidence and, if necessary, the establishment and operation of appropriate tribunals;

(4) the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, the Republic of Turkey, and the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq are to be commended for, and supported in, their efforts to shelter and protect those fleeing the violence of ISIL and other combatants until they can safely return to their homes in Iraq and Syria; and

(5) the protracted Syrian civil war and the indiscriminate violence of the Assad regime have contributed to the growth of ISIL and will continue to do so as long as this conflict continues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank JEFF FORTENBERRY and his lead cosponsor, ANNA ESHOO, for their extremely important resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, as amended, calling on the Obama administration to declare the annihilation of Christians, Yazidis, and other minorities, for what it is, a genocide.

On December 4 of last year, a coalition of prominent religious leaders wrote President Obama and stated, "Christian and Yazidi minorities in Iraq and Syria are being targeted for eradication in their ancient homelands solely because of their religious beliefs."

They had been prompted by reports of an "imminent" State Department finding that ISIS was committing genocide against the Yazidis, a finding they "wholeheartedly" endorsed, but were "deeply troubled," like we all were, that the genocide of Christians was going to be bypassed or excluded.

Apparently press reports had claimed that the rationale for excluding Christians was that, unlike the Yazidis, Christians had a choice to convert to Islam and pay an Islamic tax, or be killed, tortured, enslaved, or held hostage.

In direct rebuttal of that argument at a hearing that I held on December 9, Carl Anderson, the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, stated:

Many times the payment of the tax is not presented as an option for these Christians. In instances where the Yazidi tax has been enacted or extracted, it has failed to ensure that the Christians could live as Christians, that they were protected from rival jihadists, or even other members of ISIS, or that the amendment of payment was not raised over time until it became impossible for some of them to pay, causing the family's home, and even their children, to be confiscated, and the adults to be killed or forced to become Muslims.

It is a very, very poor argument that has been made by the State Department, so we believe they have made this. Hopefully, they will rectify it.

Let me also point out to my colleagues that the Genocide Convention defines genocide as "the killing and certain other acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group."

The religious leaders who signed the December 4 letter compiled extensive files supporting a finding that ISIS' treatment of Iraqi and Syrian Christians absolutely meets this definition. They include:

Evidence of ISIS assassinations of church leaders; mass murders; torture, kidnapping for ransom in the Christian communities of Iraq and Syria; sexual enslavement and systematic rape of Christian girls and women; its practices of forcible conversions to Islam; its destruction of churches, monasteries, cemeteries, and Christian artifacts; and its theft of lands and wealth from Christian clergy and laity alike.

They went on to cite "ISIS' own public statements taking credit for mass

murder of Christians, and expressing its intent eliminate Christian communities from the Islamic State."

The letter recounted how "ISIS jihadis have stamped Christian homes in Mosul with the red letter N for Nazarene in the summer of 2014," pointing out how the "elimination of Christians in other towns and cities in Iraq and Syria began long beforehand."

Mr. Speaker, I held a hearing 3 years ago extolling and urging the administration to recognize the genocide against Christians, and our witnesses, the private witnesses who spoke, gave instance after instance of crimes against Christians that were done simply because they were Christians.

At a December 9 hearing, we heard from four witnesses. I mentioned one a moment ago, Carl Anderson, from the Knights of Columbus. We also heard from Dr. Stanton, of Genocide Watch, who said, "Failure to call ISIS' mass murder of Christians, Shia, Muslims, and other groups in addition to the Yazidis by its proper name, genocide, would be an act of denial as grave as the U.S. refusal to recognize the Rwanda genocide back in 1994."

□ 1615

Bishop Kalabat, a Chaldean bishop, was extremely pointed in his remarks when he said that "the Obama administration, including President Obama himself, have neglected to mention that the ISIS atrocities were committed against Christians. They rightly mention atrocities committed in Iraq against the Yazidis, and they are horrific." The bishop went on, "But there are also atrocities of rape, killings, crucifixions, beheadings, hangings that the Syrian and Iraqi Christians have endured, and they are intentionally omitted." He compellingly stated that "the U.S. Government should not turn a blind eye to the genocidal atrocities faced by Iraq's ethnic and religious minorities, including the Christians, the Yazidis, and others."

Finally, in very, very powerful testimony, the head of Yazidi Human Rights Organization-International, Mr. Ismail, stated that though his people, the Yazidis, were on the verge of annihilation, he called upon the administration not to neglect the others who are also on the verge of annihilation, and said, "the Yazidis and the Chaldo-Assyrian Christians face this genocide together."

Now is the time to act. We cannot let the cries of the victims go unheeded as we once did when we confronted the genocide in Rwanda and other genocides that have occurred around the world. Mr. Speaker, I therefore urge my colleagues to vote for H. Con. Res. 75.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution deals with the crimes of ISIS.

I want to thank my colleague from California, ANNA ESHOO, and our colleague from Nebraska, JEFF FORTENBERRY, for their drafting of this resolution which I and so many others have cosponsored, and I want to thank the chair and ranking member of our committee for their work in preparing the amendment that we adopted in committee.

This resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, identifies the violent acts of ISIS by their right name: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and, where appropriate, genocide. We could and will be conducting a complete analysis in the future to identify which atrocities of ISIS are merely war crimes and which atrocities of ISIS are part of an overall systemic genocide. But it is clear that at least some of the war crimes are part of a planned genocide against religious minorities in the areas that ISIS occupies.

This resolution also includes a call upon the United States and all the states of the U.N. to conduct measures designed to prevent these crimes and genocide in the future. Now, it is said that People of the Book, most relevantly Christians, are being told by ISIS that they only have to pay a jizya and they will be allowed to live, a special tax imposed upon them. But the fact is that we know that the Yazidis are not even given that option but are subject to extermination; whereas, Christians may be told to pay the tax and then, when they run out of money, be executed because they are not paying more. So we know that ISIS is guilty of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.

In addition to passing this resolution, we ought to focus on the most significant thing the United States is doing against ISIS, and that, of course, is our airstrikes. I believe our airstrikes have been subject to rules of engagement that are far too limited. For example, we have learned that we try to cut off ISIS' flow of money by hitting the tanker trucks that are taking the oil out of ISIS areas for sale, but we are only hitting those trucks when they are parked, not when they are moving.

It is true that, if you hit a moving truck, you may kill the driver, and that driver may be an ISIS soldier or may be a civilian; but if you look at the strategic bombing that we engaged in during World War II, not just the strategic bombing of Germany, but the strategic bombing of occupied France and occupied Belgium and so many other occupied countries, you will see that we hit munitions plants and transportation tanker trucks whether or not those people operating the transportation devices and operating in the munitions plants were civilian or military.

If we are going to get serious against ISIS, we have to be willing not to target civilians but, instead, to do everything we can to prevent killing civilians; but we have to be willing to hit

strategic targets even if we are not 100 percent sure that all civilian casualties will be avoided.

So I look forward to our working both diplomatically and militarily for the destruction of ISIS and eventually holding ISIS' leaders to account for their war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), the author of H. Con. Res 75.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, first, let me thank my colleague and good friend, Congressman CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, for his tireless efforts on a whole, broad spectrum of assaults on human dignity. He is constantly trying to elevate the conscience of this body and the worldwide community. I thank the chairman, as well, for coordinating this effort and speaking favorably to it, as well as Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, who passed this through the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I need to also, because she is not here, thank ANNA ESHOO, a Democratic colleague from California.

We are living in a time when our country looks at Congress and sees stagnation, anger, and gridlock and not being able to get things done. What we have before us today is a transpartisan resolution. It has risen above the petty and difficult differences that we often work out here on the floor of the House of Representatives. It has risen above it because of its essential nature. Not only is there a grave injustice happening in the Middle East to the people, to the Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities who have as much a right to be in their ancient homeland as anyone else, but this is a threat against civilization itself.

When a group of people, ISIS—8th century barbarians with 21st century weapons—can systematically try to exterminate another group of people simply because of their faith tradition, violating the sacred space of individuality, conscience, and religious liberty, you undermine the entire system for international order building out of rule of law and proper social interaction—civilization itself. That is why so many Members have come together here in a bipartisan, transpartisan way and said, "Enough."

This is a genocide against Christians and Yazidis. It is a crime against humanity and against others, as well, who are suffering because of their religious faith.

By the way, it should be noted that the group of people who have been most killed by ISIS are innocent Muslims, as well.

This is an important resolution to speak clearly about what is happening in the land.

Why is it important? Because it raises the international consciousness,

and it compels the responsible communities of the world to act. Secondly, it creates the potential preconditions for when there is a security settlement in the Middle East that will allow these ancient faith traditions to reintegrate back into their homeland and continue to contribute to the once-rich tapestry that made up the Middle East.

That is why this is so essential. It is just. The responsible communities of the world must act, and it is essential for international order and international stability if there is going to be a chance for any type of hope and long-lasting viability of order and tranquility in that area.

As my colleague, Mr. SMITH, mentioned, Genocide Watch has labeled this genocide. The International Association of Genocide Scholars has called this genocide. The Yazidi Human Rights Organization-International has said this is genocide. Pope Francis has said that this is genocide and has decried the scandal of silence and the scandal of indifference in this regard—again, another reason why action by this body is so essential.

In addition to that, I want to leave you with one quick story.

I represent the largest Yazidi community in America. I have been dealing with this community for many, many years, many of whom resettled in Lincoln, Nebraska, because they were given special visas to come to America because they worked side by side with our soldiers during the Iraq war as translators. Because of the grave threat that they were under, they were given special privileges to become citizens here, and many settled in my State of Nebraska, my hometown, Lincoln.

I have been working with the community for a number of years about a number of concerns. About a year and a half ago, a group came to see me. Young men who had worked as translators were on the verge of tears. They were passionate and angry. I don't blame them for being angry. Their mothers, their sisters, and their family members were trapped on Mount Sinjar. They were pleading with me: Congressman, act. Do something now. We can't wait.

To the Obama administration's credit, shortly thereafter—and the House had passed a resolution creating some groundwork for trying to stop the annihilation of Yazidis—the Obama administration, President Obama, acted, and I am thankful for that.

This week we have an opportunity to continue to plead and urge the State Department to act as well. I know they are under an evaluation as to this real genocide that is happening. I respect their process, but I think the facts are clear; and it is my sincere hope that Secretary Kerry and the State Department will meet their lawful deadline this week and declare this fact: there is a genocide against Christians and Yazidis, and civilization itself is at stake.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for yielding me the time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Mr. FORTENBERRY for his very eloquent remarks and for reminding us that this is an existential threat to Christians, but really, as well, to civilization. I thank him again for the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Staten Island, New York (Mr. DONOVAN). He is a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for allowing me this time to express and rise in support of H. Con. Res. 75.

When considering the long history of civilization, we look back in horror at the unimaginable pain mankind is capable of inflicting on itself, and each succeeding generation wonders how a people stood idly by as warring factions destroyed innocent life and property.

Last year, the world watched a beach turned red as executioners sawed off the heads of 21 Coptic Christians on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Two weeks ago, terrorists stormed a retirement home full of nuns caring for the elderly and frail. And in the months in between, ISIS systemically killed or enslaved thousands of Yazidi people.

Scripture speaks of perseverance and endurance in faith under siege and not growing weary. Matthew says:

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of their righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

But that doesn't excuse our silence. Political correctness cannot stand in the way of our moral obligation as a free and decent people. I support the resolution and hope we can have the moral conviction to call this massacre what it is: genocide.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Judge POE, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, ISIS, this evil group, has been intentionally targeting Christians worldwide because of their religious belief. ISIS not only targets Christians, it targets any religious group, including some Muslims who disagree with them.

As the previous speaker from New York mentioned, they are proud of the fact that they murder people, that they behead people, and that they put their murders on television for the world to see. These atrocities committed by this terrorist group in the name of a perverted jihad religion are the worst crimes we have seen in our lifetime.

More than that, ISIS' massacres of religious and ethnic minorities fits the definition of genocide. The definition of genocide is clear. It is the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial or cultural group. That is exactly what ISIS is doing. ISIS has already forced hundreds of thousands of Christians to leave their ancestral homes.

□ 1630

For the first time since Jesus, there are almost no Christians left in this part of the world. There were 1.5 million Christians in Iraq in 2003—1.5 million. Since that time, terrorists have either killed or forced Christians to run for their lives.

Today, 13 years later, there are 66 percent fewer Christians in this area. Some of those who could not get out before ISIS came in and took over their areas have been tortured, crucified, executed, and murdered in the most inhumane possible ways, tortured because of their belief.

ISIS has not only targeted Christians, it has targeted other communities. The Yazidi community of Iraq has been tortured. ISIS slaughtered almost all of the men in one community on Mount Sinjar and then sold the women and the girls off into slavery, this demonic desire of theirs, and gave them to their fighters. It is just another example of tragic cases of genocide in world history.

ISIS will not stop, Mr. Speaker, exterminating these people, until they bow down to their ideology, and their ideology is based on hate. ISIS does not just target those under its control. The terrorists seek to cleanse the world, the whole world, from all people who do not accept their belief, including other Muslims.

It is time the United States and the rest of the world make it clear to all what ISIS is doing. We must denounce murder, this genocide, that is occurring because of people's religious belief.

I am glad that this resolution is coming forward. I am proud to be a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 75.

Mr. Speaker, justice demands ISIS be held accountable for what it does. Justice must be done. After all, isn't justice what we do in the United States?

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Texas for his speech and the gentleman from Nebraska who spoke earlier for his introduction of this resolution, along with my colleague, ANNA ESHOO, from California. And, of course, I commend CHRIS SMITH for a lifetime of work on human rights.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes to close.

I thank my good friend, Mr. SHERMAN, for his good, bipartisan, strong remarks expressed today during both of these debates on the war crimes tribunal and now on Mr. FORTENBERRY's

genocide resolution, another bipartisan piece of legislation.

I want to thank my colleagues for their moving words today. Judge POE, again, hit the nail right on the head, as did our friend from New York.

I think we need to say it and we need to say it with exclamation points, that declaring genocide is a solemn and extremely serious step not to be taken lightly.

I am very proud of the work that the Foreign Affairs Committee did. I want to thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, and the ranking member, ELIOT ENGEL, for their work on this resolution.

All of us understand the seriousness of calling crimes genocide. It represents an assertion that a legal definition has been met and that we are witnessing acts of physical and mental violence intended to destroy a group in whole or in part.

The targeted depravity of ISIS against the Yazidis, Christians, and other minorities more—I will say it again—more than meets that definition.

But far more than the legality, speaking clearly of genocide, is an appeal to the conscience of the world. It evokes the moral gravity and the imperative of never again.

The United States must not wait any longer to find its voice and call these bloody purges what they are: genocide. We and our partners must defeat ISIS so that Christians, Yazidis, all religious communities, and all the people of Syria and Iraq, can live in peace, free from this grotesque persecution.

I urge passage of the resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 75, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY TO OBTAIN OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2426) to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2426

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Safety, security and peace is important to every citizen of the world, and shared information ensuring wide assistance among police authorities of nations for expeditious dissemination of information regarding criminal activities greatly assists in these efforts.

(2) Direct and unobstructed participation in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) is beneficial for all nations and their police authorities. Internationally shared information with authorized police authorities is vital to peacekeeping efforts.

(3) With a history dating back to 1914, the role of INTERPOL is defined in its constitution: "To ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities within the limits of the laws existing in the different countries and in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

(4) Ongoing international threats, including international networks of terrorism, show the ongoing necessity to be ever inclusive of nations willing to work together to combat criminal activity. The ability of police authorities to coordinate, preempt, and act swiftly and in unison is an essential element of crisis prevention and response.

(5) Taiwan maintained full membership in INTERPOL starting in 1964 through its National Police Administration but was ejected in 1984 when the People's Republic of China (PRC) applied for membership.

(6) Nonmembership prevents Taiwan from gaining access to INTERPOL's I-24/7 global police communications system, which provides real-time information on criminals and global criminal activities. Taiwan is relegated to second-hand information from friendly nations, including the United States.

(7) Taiwan is unable to swiftly share information on criminals and suspicious activity with the international community, leaving a huge void in the global crime-fighting efforts and leaving the entire world at risk.

(8) The United States, in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review, declared its intention to support Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations and has consistently reiterated that support.

(9) Following the enactment of Public Law 108-235, a law authorizing the Secretary of State to initiate and implement a plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health Assembly and subsequent advocacy by the United States, Taiwan was granted observer status to the World Health Assembly for six consecutive years since 2009. Both prior to and in its capacity as an observer, Taiwan has contributed significantly to the international community's collective efforts in pandemic control, monitoring, early warning, and other related matters.

(10) INTERPOL's constitution allows for observers at its meetings by "police bodies which are not members of the Organization".

(b) TAIWAN'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERPOL.—The Secretary of State shall—

(1) develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in INTERPOL and at other related meetings, activities, and mechanisms thereafter; and

(2) instruct INTERPOL Washington to officially request observer status for Taiwan in